

GO!



## A Romance of Extraordinary Distinction

### THE MARSHAL

By Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews  
Author of *The Perfect Tribute, etc.*

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(Continued from Friday.)

And the governor roared with delight, for this man was his rival and it did his soul good to see him made ridiculous. He roared, and drank to the imitation, and the imitation rebuked his levity throatily, till the governor roared and drank again and shouted for more. And Francois, excited, exhilarated, did more and still the governor drank as he acted. And the vaudeville went on. So that when the guard came at eleven the count was lying across the sofa, too tipsy to get to bed alone, and Francois had to wait, pretending to be heavy with wine himself, while the two soldiers put the governor to bed.

At last he was taken upstairs between them, leaning on them limply; at last his door clanged shut; he listened to the footsteps of the two dying away down the stone hall, down the staircase; then swiftly he drew out the file and the letters from his mattress; he hid the papers, wrapped tight in their oilskin cover, in his coat lining; he set to work with the file to finish iron bars already three-quarters filed through. That was done and with fingers that seemed to work as fast as intelligently as his brain, he tore the bedclothes into stout strips and tied them together with square knots which would not slip, and tied knots in the line at intervals of a few feet which might keep a man's fingers from slipping. He had to guess how long the rope must be, but the bedclothes were all used and the rope was many yards; it must serve. He put the file, with two candle ends which he had saved, in his pocket; he made one end of the strip fast to an untouched iron bar of his window; he weighted the other end; then he looked about for a moment, half to see if all of his small resources had been remembered, half in a glance of farewell to a place where he had passed hours never to be forgotten.

With that he vaulted to the window-ledge and took the first knot in a firm grip and let himself out into the dark still night. His feet hung in the air, his hand slid fast—down that poor ladder of torn stuff; the die was cast; he was going to things unknown; he had taken a desperate chance and might not go back. And he slipped down, down, from knot to knot. Suddenly he came to the last knot; he had fastened a bit of wood there so that he might know when he got to the end. What was this? It certainly was the last knot; the bit of wood scraped his hand as he held it; but his feet did not touch ground. There he hung, swaying in blackness, not knowing how far he might be above the earth, not knowing what to do. Only a moment, for instantly he knew that in any case he could not go back, if he would, up that slight swinging rope; he must drop, whatever happened. He bent his knees ready for the fall and let go. With a shock he landed and rolled, bruised and out of breath, but not injured; he looked up and in the dim-

ness he saw the last knot with its bit of wood swinging in air 12 feet or so from the ground.

But he had not time given him to consider this point, for at that second, at the far end of the closed yard a door opened, a blaze of light poured out, and a squad of six soldiers stepped from the castle, torches in the hands of the foremost. Francois dropped, crouching into the shadows against the wall, but his heart grew sick as he realized the futility of this. The soldiers were coming straight toward him.

With that, a gleam on a brighter surface than the ground met his sight, below the level of the ground. His eyes, searching the darkness, made out a great butt of water, sunk by the castle wall. Instantly he slid into it, up to his neck. It was not quite full, and his head did not show in the shadow of the inside. The blaze of the torches swept close, brighter, as Francois, shivering in the cold water, glued himself to the dark side; the blaze of the torches waved, shadowy, gigantic, across the water and the castle wall; he heard the soldiers speak in short deep words; it was like an evil dream, and it slipped past, torches and dark-swinging shadows and heavy tread of men and stern voices, like a dream. The heavy door shut, the lights were gone, everything was still.

More dead than alive, Francois dripped from the water-butt. The hardest part of his night's job, the part that needed all his strength of body and brain, was immediately before him, and he stood nerveless, with clicking teeth, as limp as the traditional drowned rat. A moment he stood utterly discouraged, without confidence, without hope. Then with his trembling lips he framed words, words familiar to him for years, and with that, in a shock, he felt strength and courage rising in him like a slow calm flood. It was not less a miracle because there was no sign in the heavens, no earthquake or lightning; it was not less a miracle because many people living now might tell of a like help in fearful need. As it was once a long time ago, the water of his blood was changed into wine. So the prisoner stood in the courtyard in the blackness of midnight and found himself ready.

He groped his way to the shed he had seen from the governor's window; with his old boyish agility he scrambled up its sloping roof and felt for the coping he had noticed the coping wide enough for a man's foot; he had found it; he had found a water-pipe above to help him stand on it; he was on the coping, face flat to the wall, working his way with infinite delicate care to the window of the governor. He never knew how long that part took; it seemed a great while, though not many feet lay between the shed and the window. Then he felt the stone sill of the window; his hand crept up; it was open—wide open. With a strong pull he had swung himself over and stood in the dark, in the governor's bedroom.

Stood and listened, hardly daring for the first instant to draw the long breath he sorely needed. Then he smiled. No necessity for that caution at least. The governor was snoring a heavy aggressive snore which would have drowned most noises. Francois stood quiet till his eyes had grown accustomed to the shadows, and then they searched about quickly. Ah! there they were, the governor's clothes. On a chair by his bed. With wary steps he stole across. He lifted off one or two things and suddenly there was a jingle.

"Ah!" growled the governor and flung out his hand, and the snore came to a full stop.

The hand searched the darkness a second; all but touched that of Francois, then fell limply, the head turned away, with a deep sigh. Like a statue Francois stood, frozen to the

floor, and dared not look at the figure stirring in the bed, for fear his gaze might awake the sleeper. For he slept; the sound of the keys had only jarred some chord in his uneasy dream. Long minutes after the snoring was in full progress again Francois waited, and then with careful fingers he clasped the entire bunch of keys softly and carried them into the next room.

There was a low light there, on the writing-table. Francois slipped the thin, old, brass key which he knew off from the bunch; he glanced about quickly and found the flint and steel on its table and put them in his pocket; he took down that small sabre, with its well-polished scabbard, and buckled it about himself; then a thought came to him. A sheet of paper lay on the governor's writing-table as if he had been about to write a letter; pen and ink were ready. The prisoner dropped into the governor's chair and wrote:

"My dear count, I can not run away without leaving a good-by for you and a word of thanks for the kindness you have shown me. Be sure I shall not forget our evenings together and shall be glad when I hear of your promotion, as I am sure I shall hear. I heartily hope I am not going to make trouble for you. But I have to go—you will understand that. With a thousand thanks again I am, count, your grateful prisoner—Francois Beaupre." And under the signature by an after inspiration he wrote:

"De tous cote's l'on dit que je suis bete— Cela se peut! Et cependant j'en ris."

Still the count snored. Francois, alert, stood and listened as he folded the note carefully and laid it under a weight on the table. Then he tempted providence no longer. He slid the battered, bright, old, brass key softly into the lock, let himself into the dark stairway, relocked the door on the inside, groped his way painfully down the stone stairs into the wine-cellar, and when he felt a level floor under his feet struck a light with the governor's flint and steel. He lighted one of his candle ends. The wine-cellar, which he had left only two hours before, seemed almost homelike; it lacked the governor, that was all. He crossed to the projecting stone in the north wall, and pressed the corner of the stone below. Nothing happened. Hurriedly he pressed it again, harder, but the cold even surface of the wall stared him blankly in the face. Again he pushed—with no result. A sickness came over him. Was all his labor and peril to go for nothing? Was he to be caught again and thrust back, this time into some far worse dungeon? How had he dared to hope! The entrance was closed, and overgrown, the masonry had grown solid with years and dampness.

(To be continued Monday.)

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Christmas Lesson: The Word Made Flesh.—John 1:1-18.  
Golden Text.—And the word became flesh and dwelt among us.—John 1:14.

**THE INCARNATION.**  
1. God Prepared a Body in Which to Dwell.—The wonderful story of God made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ is much easier to understand by faith than it is of explanation. The theory of the immaculate conception is that Jesus while born of Mary, did not have any earthly father; that God supernaturally became the father of Jesus, and that he was therefore the son of a virgin and his birth miraculous. I am not concerned about this or any other theory, but the fact is very clearly apprehended by me, that God did dwell in the body of Jesus, and that his birth, whether natural or supernatural, made God manifest in the flesh. Jesus was undoubtedly born of Mary in harmony with the story which we have of that event, and his life and teaching, and above all his death and resurrection, have demonstrated that God dwelt in him in all his fullness. God either naturally or supernaturally, or by both methods combined, prepared himself a body in the person of Jesus in which he could live in the flesh, and tell mankind of his love, and teach, as from man to man concerning his plan of salvation.

2. God From Eternity. Jesus as a man began to be, he was admittedly born of Mary and therefore received his entire manhood, body, spirit, soul, from his mother, just as we have received our manhood from our mothers. It is well therefore to realize the fact that Jesus of Nazareth began his career as a babe, and that he had a beginning, just as the rest of us, notwithstanding the fact that the Christ of God is from eternity. God never began to be, so that when the Christ is spoken of as having pre-existed from all eternity, it evidently means that God himself, who dwelt in Jesus, and was in a mysterious way, incorporated in the human nature of Jesus, is referred to. It is I think, a means of confusion on the part of some, and unbelief and ridicule on the part of others, to have a theory of the deity of Jesus Christ which is contrary to reason and the facts. There is no doubt what we call mystery, in connection with the divine nature of Jesus, and yet, as with other mysterious facts of nature, it need not be mystifying, or ought to be able to obtain from the records, by the aid of God's Holy Spirit, a reasonable understanding of the incarnation.

3. The Word Became Flesh. There is a double meaning to the Greek term "Logos," or word of God. It sometimes means reason or intelligence, as it exists inwardly in the mind, and at other times reason or intelligence as it is expressed outwardly in speech. I think it is this two-fold thought that John expresses when he says in the text that "The word became flesh." It is that God's wisdom and power became incarnated, or, if you will, incorporated in the person of Jesus, and that he manifested in his life and speech the mind or the thought of God. That is, Jesus became the word of God, or the expression of God, or the message of God, to the world. It is that God's wisdom, and power, and love, were in Jesus the Christ, so that, as we write, we express it. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." The word of God or the "Logos" became flesh, hence when Jesus speaks we are listening to the eternal God; when he acts, such as when he raised the dead, or stilled the tempest, we witness the act of God.

4. Jesus Was Born Man and God. This may be a complicated thought to many, but to those who have been living in harmony with the Lord for any length of time, and have become accustomed to walk and talk with him, and by meditation upon his ways are to a certain extent familiar with the Divine processes, it is a simple truth practically, if not fully comprehended. In the first place Jesus was under obligation to do the work of a man, to obey God's laws, and to fulfill his human destiny, as any other man; and as I believe, under obligations to do all these things with just the same kind of Divine help that any other Christian may have. In this respect he is our perfect example, which by the grace of God we may imitate and as I believe, duplicate. As a man he was tempted and subjected to human limitations. He was tired and hungry; he slept, he suffered, he prayed, and finally died. Now the eternal God has never done any of these things, nor can God pray to himself, hence, "Jesus took not upon him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." But while he was very man, he was very God, and his work and mission as the Christ was the work and mission of God himself. I pray that the Holy Spirit may use these inadequate words of mine, to give you some comforting conception concerning the incarnation and that it may help others, who have doubted his divinity, to believe.

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